

# Golden Pond Trail

Along the trail, you'll see white signs with blue letters. These letters correspond with the information in this guide for further details.

## U. Sapwells



Sapwells are lines of small holes made by yellow-bellied sapsuckers. Paper Birch trees are the sapsuckers favorite trees, but they will drill holes into other trees as well. From these tiny holes, the woodpeckers will drink the sap that drains from them.

The sapwells also provide food for other animals like squirrels, hummingbirds, and insects.

## L. Burrows

Burrows are important for many animals. They provide a safe place to eat, sleep, and raise the young. Larger burrows, also known as dens, are made by many animals, including foxes and badgers. A fox can have 4-6 kits in a litter and a badger could have 1-5 pups. Other examples of animals that make burrows are chipmunks, rabbits, woodchucks, and minks.

## X. Bluebird Houses



The bluebird houses are set up in groups of two, because Tree Swallows migrate North before the Eastern Bluebird and take over one house. Tree Swallows are territorial and won't let another Tree Swallow nest nearby. Fortunately, they will allow Eastern Bluebirds to live and nest next to them. Also, bluebird houses are recommended to be painted light colors, if at all. Light colors will reflect sunlight rather than absorb it-this prevents the eggs from cooking.

## B. Wood Duck House



Wood Ducks usually nest in April and the ducklings hatch about 30 days after being laid. To leave the house, the ducklings simply fall out of it onto the ground by the waiting mother, who calls to them from below. Due to limited hollowed trees to nest in, these houses are an excellent substitute for Wood Ducks.

## H. Peach-leaf Willows



These are the primary trees that beavers use for their dams and homes (called beaver lodges) along the Golden Pond Trail. Not only do beavers eat the willows but so do deer, moose, and rabbits. The tree provides nesting area for birds and the buds provide them with food.

## O. Beaver Lodge

Beavers make their homes by gnawing down trees and piling them up in the water. The lodges are hollowed tree and mud structures with underwater entrances. A beaver family can consist of up to a dozen individuals living together.

## G. Bat House

This bat house was made to hold up to 5,000 bats. Bats usually spend the day sleeping under the bark of trees but this shelter provides a great substitute since loose tree bark may be scarce. Bats are beneficial to humans in many ways. They help clean up all those insects we don't like, such as mosquitoes. A single bat can eat up to 500 mosquitoes and other flying insects per hour!

## **P. Galls**

Galls are made by insects such as gall wasps, aphids, and flies by laying eggs in the plant. The larvae cause the formation of a round growth, known as a gall, on the plant for protection using a chemical in their saliva. The larvae may live there for up to a year until becoming adults and eating their way out of the gall.



## **C. Bird Nests**

Bird nests are commonly seen in trees or shrubs but are also made on the ground, or at the surface of a body of water. The one you see here in this low tree is a sparrow nest that has been filled with acorns by a squirrel. The nest is made of grasses and a few small twigs and is about 6 feet off the ground.

For further information on the animals and plants at Rydell NWR, books may be checked out in the visitor's center or purchased at the Gift Shop.



Rydell National Wildlife Refuge  
17788 349<sup>th</sup> Street Southeast  
Erskine, MN 56535  
(218)687-2229/ (800)841-0172

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# **RYDELL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE**

## **Golden Pond Trail Guide**

Theme: Animal Homes



Golden Pond trail (1.5 miles) provides some great examples of how animals use their surroundings for homes and shows several homes made by humans for the animals.